

Long may it sustain them

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/14011389) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/14011389>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham , Hannibal Lecter
Additional Tags:	Fluff , Smut , Hannibal Loves Will , Will Loves Hannibal , Dogs , Jealous Will Graham , Angst , Emotional Hurt/Comfort , Domestic
Language:	English
Series:	Part 10 of Tomorrow was our Golden Age .
Stats:	Published: 2018-03-21 Completed: 2018-03-27 Words: 2,880 Chapters: 3/3

Long may it sustain them

by [Zigzagwanderer](#)

Summary

Will and Hannibal are living, post Fall, on their Baltic island. Will the threats to their balance come from without or within? Comes after Sea, Swallow Me/As Long As I Can Hold My Breath.

Notes

Just another big, big thank you to all who read/leave kudos/comments-much appreciated.
Hugs to you all.xxxxx

Chapter 1

Perkunas walks through the tangled trees. He is a bear-dog, a god-in-the-wild. He carries scars. His eyes have owned atrocities. Like the land, he has been lashed. Like the spring storm, he has bitten deep.

But all that was before he was given his kingdom. His Vakkrehejm. His new name.

Before Hannibal freed him from one uncivil warlord or another. Brought him home.

“C’mon Conn,” Will’s shoulder is already grumbling under the weight he has hoisted up. And there is yet more to be cleared in this copse alone, the carrion of deposed ancients to be picked over, the limbs to be seasoned and stored against winters to come, the trunks to be left as tribute for the dark feeders, the fruiting, fungal ones who butcher and suck. “Let’s go. That’s definitely enough for now.”

Will tucks a fox skull into his pocket. Predation has polished it, perfecting it for practice, for Will to learn the way of it, this primal fabric, how it might be purposed and positioned, eternally, in their lives.

He looks at his wedding band; he is *always* looking at it, and today it is the grey of the eel under the blue wash of the southern straits.

Yesterday, it mirrored the grey of the nimbus that sometimes traps them with squalling, angry tears, envy so violent and drenching upon the roof of their little white house that Hannibal and Will remain entwined in their bed, calling down further jealousies from the sky.

And each and every ghosting tomorrow it will be the bleak, caged colour of their past existence, the grey of misconstruction and missed opportunity, that is now, at last, put right.

Will puts the tungsten up against his cheek. Both rings will be more beautiful still when set with trophies of bone.

Conn emerges ahead of Will onto their scrap of meadow. For all his great thunder, the beast pads more gently through the tough little wildflowers than does his master, who is gritting and grinding after him, beneath his greedy bundle, driving himself homeward with thoughts of stealing a few spoonsful of cold risotto, of boiling, herbed and salted bathwater.

Will curses, neck curved and stumbling, as if he is some great serpent of the sea that cannot comprehend the unmoving contours of the land.

He only sees Hannibal when he throws down the firewood in the courtyard and blots the sweat out of his eyes.

Chapter 2

Hannibal has been bathing Sandy, out of the hellish wind. Steam still rises from the overturned trough, from the newly-formed underworld of soap-sulphured lakes, from a furiously-shaking Sandy, and from Hannibal himself.

So did the Flood come, after the Fall; catastrophically, and with all speed.

“He cavorted in some...rotting matter. From the spindle-shape of the partial remains it appeared to be the torso of a dead seal. On the beach.” Hannibal is soaked. Calm, but completely soaked. The precaution of neatly folding up his white shirt-sleeves has not much helped. “The stench, Will, was intolerable.”

Sandy gleams, yellow and sweet now as the coltsfoot dotting the furred lea, and frolics away, newly baptised, towards the huge, heathen Conn.

Hannibal wrings water from his fringe, blinking. Blithely brushes Phlegethon and Acheron from his forearms. His trousers are stuck to him, hip to hip, tightly flowing against the muscle swells of thigh and calf. He has pulled on a pair of Will’s work boots at some point; they are unlaced and waterlogged.

“Sandy deemed the hose-spray a sport of some kind, and he would not be still, so I thought it best to immerse him.”

Will is, very suddenly, not tired at all. Maybe it is those rough, borrowed boots. Maybe it is the attempt itself.

"You're wet," he says.

Hannibal frowns. He begins wrangling the sodden shirt from his waistband, but Will steps quickly over, across the muddy paving, and stops him.

“No. Leave it. Let’s go inside.”

He walks Hannibal backwards, his hands pushing the transparent cotton taut against Hannibal’s chest, spreading it out. Will feels as if he is prying into Hannibal.

He is glimpsing his lover, unmasked, betrayed, through a shard-rimmed window, the curtains flayed back.

He is seeing his heart's prisoner, through a backlit wall of glass.

Hannibal shivers, perhaps surprised, again, and nearly falls. Again.

Will frames the dark bump of a nipple with his thumbs. “Go. Inside,” he repeats, without looking away from Hannibal's body.

“Will, the...” Hannibal sidesteps, trying to point at the mess, but Will takes Hannibal’s dripping fingers, and slides them atop his tongue, clenching his lips around the root of them.

He hollows his cheeks and dips his chin and effectively deafens them both to any further discourse.

It has never been that Will is shy. Lacking faith, perhaps. A novice, certainly. But if he has allowed Hannibal to lead him in their liturgies, then it is because Will has been waiting an *eternity*. For Hannibal to be free to simply *adore* him.

And now, it is so; Hannibal *cherishes* him, even as he bites or scratches, filling Will, to the brim, almost beyond Will's ability to take it and take it, with a heavy, endless, devotion. To Will, it has been like a drug.

But, on the sobering edge of a thwarted north-easterly, Will is clear, and sharp, and he wants to be the one to push the needle in.

They back up to the steps, and shove one another into the first room they come to. They kiss while Will throws off his coat, undoes Hannibal's sodden shirt, and pins him down on the waxed planking. Hannibal does not resist the burning discomfort of the chilled clothing, the dry sting of pine needles that no amount of sweeping can rid them of; he is nothing more than a hot and prickling thing now, anyway, under Will.

The front door slams and rattles in the wind, rattles and slams again.

Hannibal cannot look at the downward curve of Will's lips. He must look at the table, at the lamp, at the door handle.

The need to see Will puzzle him out has been Hannibal's greatest undoing; he has risked all, slayed all, given all just to put that particular crease in Will's brow.

There are echoes of it in their everyday lives, when Will heads off to the workshop, intent on a repair, or when he is sailing in untrustworthy weather, and often when he is sitting up in bed, reading aloud to Hannibal from a forensic periodical.

But the purest source of Will's perplexity, the focus of his most brilliant reasoning and reckoning, has long been Hannibal Lecter alone.

And Hannibal knows that he will see the intent and calculation of it there, now, on Will's face, and that it will undo him again.

So he closes his eyes, and holds his hands up, out of Will's way.

He makes an indrawn sound, as his scars are licked, that pleases Will *immensely*.

At Hannibal's waist, Will wrenches the clinging linen down somehow, and lifts Hannibal's thigh. He is all delicacy and urgency, using his fingertips inside and the sawing edge of his hand along and between. He has callouses and the Norse leatherwork of his watch is like a strop against Hannibal's skin. His mouth finds occupation.

After not many moments, it occurs to Will to employ the rim of icy tungsten in deliberate, sparking ways and Hannibal puts both hands down on the back of Will's head and *pleads*.

This has happened before, but never has Will believed so surely that the supplication is for Hannibal's satisfaction alone, and not a prayer delivered to drive Will insane.

Tangled up in clothing, tangled up in Will's inventive engagement in the task, Hannibal can do little else beyond weaving up or down into whatever Will does that he particularly likes, which is to say, everything, until even Hannibal's monstrous capacity for pleasure is exceeded.

Will is back from washing his hands and drinking a glass of water before Hannibal can do more than sit up.

Their expressions, as they regard one another, are much less complex than usual.

"Y'know, I really do want you all the time." Will closes the front door and stands with his back against it, watching Hannibal finish undressing. "I genuinely always have, no matter what or...who else we were involved in." There is a pause, but Will still cannot say certain names out loud. "I thought my salvation was supposed to be in knowing what I *ought* to desire. Which was definitely not you. I resisted because it's goddamn unfair."

Hannibal rather aimlessly places his trousers, which are ruined, over the back of a chair. "You objected to experiencing something that the entire population seems to crave above all else."

Will shrugs, seriously. "It's more than merely love, with us. This is...invasive. Absorbing. At the start, it was more like being ill. A specific viral attack. Constant fever."

"You were ill. You did have a fever."

"I barely belonged to myself, physically." Will walks over and tries to do something with Hannibal's hair. "I was damned if I was going to belong to you, emotionally."

Hannibal recognises Aquinas or Maritain in Will's confession, but is too distracted to comment on such abstractions. He almost remarks about the nature of damnation, but Will's touch is too lovely; absent and precise all at once.

"And then later, you feared that I would kill and eat you," he says, because sometimes it is as gorgeously easy to make Will smile as it is to make him frown.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

I just re-read this and it made me cry. Is that weird?

They go into the sitting room, where there is warmth, and whiskey. Hannibal declines neither, on this occasion.

Will does not seek reciprocation, but kisses Hannibal over and over, silently and satisfyingly. Sandy and Conn are called away from the hearth, and Will revives the fire.

He brings in some dishes from the kitchen, and Hannibal sits the fox skull on the arm of the settee while they cut into leftovers that have not even been properly plated. Will pushes the laptop away to make room for shavings of cheese and black bread, and to have somewhere to tumble an armful of apples, but then as the last page viewed lights up, he pulls it back over towards him.

He picks up a knife. Scrolls through a history.

One of the concert halls is familiar, a low-lit glass scimitar reflecting back the phalanx of prestige trees that surrounds it.

Hannibal spoke invitingly to him of tickets, once, an age ago, a lifetime ago, and Will remembers, as he pares out a bruise, a scabrous imperfection, how he shook his head so hard in refusal that it *hurt*.

Their past has serrations, and while some have been blunted through use, the meaningful use of the physical and the use of truth, then there are others that are still small, snick-toothed smiles, waiting to bite, waiting for blood.

“Antony Linna?” Will squints at the onscreen programme, at the pictures. There is nothing much to be said of the slight, black-clad cellist, who has so recently graced the Baltimore Pavilions; his tale is told by the behaviour of those around him, who flock towards him, pretty hummingbirds and stately crows all flocking, flocking, wanting to sip.

Hannibal nods, mouth taking fruit. There is the faintest tang of himself on Will’s fingertips, beneath the soap and rye and juice, and, impossibly, Hannibal begins to ache again for their pointed attention.

“You sure this is your blond friend’s brother?” Will asks, sourly, sweetly. There is little family resemblance to the brittle Chief of Police. The recitalist is all unruly curls and curving scowl. Will scratches his own head and glares his own glare back.

Hannibal nods again. Indicates the starchy invitation that Will has placed, with mordant formality, on the mantle. There is a handwritten amendment to it now.

"Ante's homecoming party has regretfully been postponed until midsummer," Hannibal informs him. "Daniel finds it inconceivable that a wastrel with a libertine's reputation should be in such high demand from respectable places of entertainment, but there it is."

Where do these regretful, inconceivable conversations take place?

Once, when Will returned from re-supplying at Ernesta's, there was a smear of diesel on their dock, such as a motor launch might leave behind. Hannibal made no comment on the scent of it, hanging over Vakkrehejm, the lingering odour of officialdom. And neither did Will.

He taps the tapering tip of the knife against his forehead. Against his cheek.

The fox skull watches, unseeing. It is ready and waiting for the bone-saw.

Will presses into his bottom lip, just off-centre, just inside. A pin-prick, nothing more, but Hannibal turns towards him nonetheless.

Will stares back. Hannibal is beautiful. Even in a much-used blanket, drinking whiskey he can appreciate but does not like, with dust clumps in his hair, he is as beautiful a thing as Will can conceive. Beautiful in the way that only things that live their whole lives in courage can be.

He wants to hold Hannibal's hand, but doesn't.

There is blood in his mouth as he looks down at Hannibal's wedding band.

Will thinks of the last few months, and before that, the last few years. There is a grey that only the shadow of captivity can bring to one's skin; more indelible still the tone where there is no hope; Will moves his thumb down, reaching for the metal, to scrape away that particular colour, but it is all part of it, alloyed into it, into them, and it cannot be separated out now.

"Molly," he says, and it grates.

It doesn't matter that Hannibal stops moving, completely. Will says it again anyway.

"Molly Graham," he continues, "was a mistake."

The wind is clearly heard now, it shreds the air without, and Conn wakes up and looks around. A military animal, he has sensed just such a sharpening in spaces before; at the point where truces had failed, at the point when all were surely about to fall.

Will and Hannibal breathe.

What else can they do?

Hannibal does not say; *yes*.

Hannibal does not say; *and so you gave her to my sundering rage, to have me do what you could not, to have me excise what you could not. To have me do what would not have been forgiven.*

Hannibal does not say; *a reckoning indeed, to pay for another's mistake, to be made to amputate one's own devotion.*

Conn barks at the wind. Sandy stirs, whining.

“Tell me,” Will whispers, mouth bloody and hand pushed into Hannibal’s hand now. “Tell me if he’s touched you. Daniel fucking Linna. Tell me if you’ve touched him.”

There is nothing but the wind. The dogs, rustling like leaves on the rug.

Will tightens his grip, to grind the bones sharp, to splinters, to blades. “He wants you. Thinks he can have you. Has he, Hannibal? Has he had you? Have you let him?”

It is none of his business, Will knows.

Hannibal was sent away, he was in exile, in mourning, he was alone, he was unwell.

It is none of Will’s business, this history, this piece of their past. It is not *his*.

Yet he makes himself think of it.

The need to be held. To be reached for. To fuck, and in that one piercing moment, to forget.

“There were...moments,” Hannibal says, after a while.

“We talked,” Hannibal clarifies.

Will does not know, he cannot think clearly enough to be sure, but he thinks that may be worse, than to touch, or to fuck.

The two quiet gentlemen sit together in their little white house.

The wind dies and the dogs retreat to the verandah.

After a while, Hannibal fetches a bottle of antique wine; it is not a celebration, a sacrament, a forgiveness, it is merely because Hannibal prefers to drink wine and Will usually does not mind one way or another.

After a while longer, they make love, to one another, silently and satisfyingly, not as if love was the enemy of pain, but as if it was its lover; as if love could hold pain in its arms, and lap at its closed eyes, and enter it, over and over, to make it a whole thing again. A beautiful thing, a sharp thing. A thing of courage.

And after they are done, Will reaches down to the floor for his coat, to cover them as they cool, the blanket slick and lost.

And as he picks up the worn corduroy, scented with Vakkrehejm, with his sweat and the harvest from their wood, with their dogs and those goddamn pine needles that cannot be kept at bay, a heap of flowers falls from the pocket.

They are weary by now, closed-in and utterly untidy, they are utterly Will, the vetch and the ox-eye and the yellow spring coltsfoot that he had picked from their meadow.

“Oh, yeah. I forgot.” Will bunches them awkwardly. “Y’know, with all the excitement,” he adds.

And Will hands them to Hannibal, who is tired too, and who is bloody, and who is happy to be both.

“Here,” Will says quietly, and puts his lips against the warm round of Hannibal’s shoulder. “I guess these must be for you.”

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!